DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 181 092 UD 019 831

AUTHOR Montero, Darrel: Levine, Gene N.
TITLE Third Generation Japanese Americans: Prospects and Protents.
INSTITUTION California Univ., Los Angeles.
SPONS AGENCY Carnegie Corp. of New York, N.Y.: Japanese American Citizens League, San Francisco, Calif.: National Inst. of Mental Health (DHEW), Rockville, Md.
PUB DATE [74]
GRANT 5-RO1-MH12780-04
NOTE 15p.; Not available in paper copy due to the reproduction quality of the original document

EDRS PRICE MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS Academic Aspiration: *Acculturation: Education: Intermarriage: *Japanese Americans: *Professional Occupations: Residential Patterns
IDENTIFIERS California (Los Angeles)

ABSTRACT

Japanese Americans have attained a remarkable degree of assimilation, especially on the part of the Sansei, the second American-born generation. In a sample of Sansei studied, three in four report having at least one non-Japanese friend; only 24 percent adhere to Buddhism (as compared to 37 percent among the Nisei, the first American-born generation); 67 percent live in neighborhoods that are largely non-Japanese; and 40 percent of those that are married have non-Japanese spouses. Although these factors seem to indicate strong leanings toward assimilation, there are some countervailing data that indicate that although the local Japanese American community may decrease in importance, a national community bound by professional and ethnic ties may arise. (Author/WP)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED181092

OCT 2 1979

THIRD GENERATION JAPANESE AMERICANS:

PROSPECTS AND PROTENTS*

DARREL MONTERO
ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

and

GENE N. LEVINE
UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

*The study upon which this paper is based was made possible through grants from the Japanese American Citizens League, the Carnegie Corporation of New York, and the National Institute of Mental Health (Grant No. 5 R01 MH12780-04). Computing assistance was obtained from the Health Sciences Computing Facility, UCLA, sponsored by NIH Special Research Resources Grant PR-3. We gratefully acknowledge the valuable comments made on earlier drafts of this paper by Kenneth D. Bailey, Edna Bonacich, Tara McLaughlin, and Frank Stratford. This paper represents a revision of our paper presented at the annual meetings of the Pacific Sociological Association, San Jose, California, 1974.

UD019831

U S DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Darrel Montero
Arizona State Univ.

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

Introduction

Evidence and observation alike reveal that Japanese Americans, at least in the immigrant and first American-born generations, have formed a relatively solidary community. Few in number, geographically clustered, racially distinctive, and victims of economic and social discrimination, they have perhaps had no other option. Since the end of World War Two, however, many barriers between the Japanese Americans and the majority whites--psychological, social and economic--have crumbled. The data to be presented today reveal a remarkable degree of assimilation and acculturation on the part of the third-generation, the Sansei--more precisely, the second American-born generation. We shall see that their economic intentions alone forecast either a gradual erosion and eventual dissolution of the Japanese American community, or its utter transformation to suit new conditions.

Methods

The immigrants themselves are commonly referred to as Issei, which means first-generation in Japanese. Their American-born children are called Nisei, and the Nisei's children Sansei. The Sansei tend still to be quite young (most are in college); their successors, the Yonsei and the Gonsei, wait in the wings.

The Japanese American Research Project was founded in the early Sixties at U.C.L.A. to assay, inter alia, the social and economic progress of three generations of Japanese American families. At first Continent-wide listings were made of surviving Issei, both men and women. Some 18,000 were eventually found. A sample of the Issei representative of their residences (nearly half lived in Greater Los Angeles) was interviewed in great detail between 1963 and the cut-off date, August, 1966. Of the 1047 immigrants queried, 907 had

progeny at least some of whom themselves consented to be studied. During 1966-1967 we either interviewed or successfully utilized mail questionnaires with about 2300 of the Nisei children. Subsequently, in late 1967 and early 1968, the Sansei grandchildren 18 years old and older were asked to respond to a mail questionnaire. There were 802 usable replies. The figure represents a response rate after three mailings of 76 percent. In all, we have in our sample 348 three-generational families. Our main concern is with the Sansei. We next observe some of their salient characteristics. Fully 95 percent of our Sansei respondents were 30 or younger in 1967-1968. Forty-seven percent of the Sansei are young men and 53 percent young women.

A Portrait of the Sansei

Eight out of the ten live in the Pacific Region, one in every three in Los Angeles--the metropolis of Japanese America, at least still for some years to come. When queried 70 percent of the Sansei were still single. We shall turn later to the matter of ethnicity of choice of mate.

Even given the fact that most of our sample have lived within proximity of others of their ilk, only 32 percent report that their parents wanted them to stick with other Japanese Americans while growing up. And a bare nine percent report that they themselves would want their own children-to-come, the Yonsei, so to sequester themselves. The result indicates clearly the desire of both Nisei and Sansei to learn to navigate in the larger Caucasian society. Further, the respondents were asked about the ethnicity of their two closest friends. An astounding three in four of the Sansei report that at least one of their friends is non-Japanese. Neither were the Nisei divorced from intimate bonds with non-Japanese. To the same question nearly half of the Nisei respondents report alien friendships. Even so, we see that although

the Sansei resemble the Nisei, they tend to be even more absorbed in the nonethnic society.

Although the large majority of the Sansei have non-Japanese friends, this does not mean that they feel themselves completely at home in the larger context. So high a percentage as 23 say that as Japanese Americans they are in some ways hindered in their advance. Sixty-six percent remark that the ethnic and racial tag hindered their parents' chances at least somewhat.

Among our Sansei sample only 38 percent have been launched upon their own independent lives--that is, have become married, are no longer living under the parental roof, and usually have independent means (although some of the married are still students). Thus six in ten of the sample are still subject to parental control and restraint whether at home or away at school. Fifty-three percent still live at home, and another fifth in the same neighborhood or city.

Further current opportunity for potential social control by the older generation over the Sansei is provided by nonparental relatives. Eighty-three percent have at least one relative outside the household in the same city. And as many as 47 percent have at least one relative in the same neighborhood. In addition, one-quarter have non-nuclear relations right in the home--grandparents, as a leading example.

For all the chances for the censoring of Sansei behavior, in many respects they differ markedly from their elders. Take the matter of religion, not all to be sure a major issue producing cleavage among Japanese Americans. Whether one be Buddhist, Christian, or nonbeliever causes no sparks to fly, even in the same family. But the affiliation, or lack of it, does bespeak tendencies toward acculturation. Of the Issei grandparents, 65 percent were Buddhist and 35 percent converted to Christianity. The Nisei figures are:

37 percent Buddhist, 54 percent Christian, and 9 percent nonbelievers. The Sansei set the trend: only 24 percent adhere to Buddhism, 56 percent to Christianity, while an augmenting 20 percent profess no faith at all. Thus, even though still largely within the bosom of the Japanese community, on this measure at least the Sansei exercise their acculturative independence. And they do it while in interaction with their more traditional kin. Three in every four claim that they do pay regular visits to nonhousehold relatives. In fact, one-third visit five or more times a month.

The Japanese neighborhood, however, does not exist in ghetto-like terms. The population is too thin. Thus, even 45 percent of the Issei live in neighborhoods that are largely non-Japanese American, as do 58 percent of all Nisei surveyed. Expectedly, the Sansei live in neighborhoods that are even more alien: 67 percent of our respondents live among other kinds of Americans, mostly Caucasian. This neighborhood mixture would serve to counteract traditionalistic pressures of the older generations.

Apart from family and neighbors, more formal associations can also act as agencies of social control. Seventy-six percent of the Nisei belong to at least one formal organization; of those who do, fully 60 percent belong to a Japanese American group. In contrast, only 32 percent of the Sansei are joiners--a fact partly to be explained by their youth. But of those who do belong to at least one organization, a lesser 47 percent belong to one that is Japanese American. Again we observe a move away from that which is distinctively Japanese American.

Perhaps the most telling findings regarding the assimilation of the Sansei relate to their marriages and marriage plans. Only 30 percent of our sample are married. Of the married, 40 percent married a non-Japanese. In comparison, only 10 percent of the Nisei have been exogamous and one percent of the Nisei.

Among the single six percent are engaged, 29 percent are going steady, while the rest are dating casually or not dating. Remarking upon the engaged or going steady, fully 55 percent are involved with non-Japanese Americans, usually Caucasians. We predict that the outmarriage rate will be even greater among the subgeneration of younger Sansei--those too young to have been surveyed in 1967-1968. Only 10 percent of our sample believe it to be bad to outmarry, 16 percent say it is good and 74 percent are indifferent. Assimilation via this route would surely spell the diminution of the Japanese American community within another generation or two. The data next to be presented reveal negative pressures on the community of another kind.

Education and Occupational Choice

As we have reported elsewhere, Japanese Americans have a phenomenal record of educational accomplishments. In terms of median school years they do have the highest rate of any population group reported by the Census, white or nonwhite. This is reflected within our study. Fifty-seven percent of the Nisei queried have had at least some college training. The Sansei continue the pace: a remarkable 88 percent have gone beyond high school. And the figures are nearly as high for women as for men.

Toward what occupational ends are our Sansei bent? In college over a third to a half of the men choose majors in "hard-nosed" fields--engineering, and science--that are most likely to take them out of the communities, at least geographically. There is more to this point below.

Now let us consider the occupational aspirations of the men in the Sansei sample, most of whom were still in college when our questionnaire arrived.

Over seven in every ten would choose a profession as the preferred

life's work. Seventy-two percent are certain or find it likely that they will achieve their goal. Six in ten see a profession as a likely occupation. Professionalism, then, is well-established among Sansei as most desirable. And they believe they have the chance to achieve it. In comparison, only 5 percent of the Issei and 32 percent of the Nisei could reach so favored a socioeconomic position. Of interest to us, however, in terms of the preservation of the Japanese American community, are the specific professions the young Sansei men aspire toward.

Specific Professions

Consideration of the specific professions the Sansei in our sample prefer to enter reveals that 73 percent plan to enter a profession and that a sizable proportion of these tend to choose fields that would separate them from the immediate confines of a local Japanese American community.

Specifically, 42 percent of the respondents entertain plans to enter fields like engineering, science, and professorships. Requirements of the labor market would willy-nilly cause their dispersal over the land to locales devoid of Japanese Americans. The others select more local professions--physicians, dentists, accountants, for example--that would permit a return to familiar environs once training be completed.

Of the men who reveal a tendency toward dispersal, fully 94 percent choose some branch of engineering, the sciences, or the humanities. The largest cluster would be engineers, about one in every five of those with a push or a pull, or both, to leave the home setting.

We do not mean to slight Sansei women. Sixty-two percent of them, too, opt for the professions. But only 12 percent select fields that would draw them from home. Fully 45 percent plan to become primary or secondary

schoolteachers (as compared with 8 percent of the men), a more localistic choice of job. But, they may later be dispersed geographically if they decide to seek teaching jobs out of their communities, especially as a result of marriage.

Conclusions

We have seen that the Sansei under study have strong leanings toward acculturation and assimilation. This is true in personal and economic life. Neither tendency bodes far for the Japanese American community. Are the centrifugal forces too great for its perseverence? Although we have presented a gloomy picture so far, there are some countervailing data. Witness that about half actually know the ken or prefecture in Japan from whence their grandparents came. Not every ethnic group's young could score so high. True, only 14 percent regularly read a Japanese American newspaper. And a bare two percent speak Japanese. But fully 94 percent would like to speak it better. We conclude that although the local Japanese American community may decrease in importance, a national one may emerge in which professional men--and women--are linked through yet-to-be formed organizational ties. No one would want the culture to atrophy too far or to expire; but the means of its transformatio are still to be formulated and put into effect.

REFERENCES

Barton, Allen H.

1968 "Bringing Society Back In: Survey Research and Macro-Methodology." American Behavioral Scientist 12 (2) (November-December):1-9.

Brooks, M.S. and K. Kunihiro

1952 "Education in the Assimilation of Japanese: A Study in the Houston Area of Texas." Sociology and Social Research 27 (September-October):16-22.

Caudill, William

1952 "Japanese-American Personality and Acculturation. Genetic Psychology Monographs 45, Part 1, (February):3-101.

Coleman, James S., E.Q. Campbell, C.J. Hobson, J. McPartland, A.M. Mood, F.D. Weinfeld, and R.L. York.

1966 Equality of Educational Opportunity. Washington, D.C.: United States Government Printing Office.

Crain, Robert L. and Carol Sachs Weisman

1972 Discrimination, Personality, and Achievement: A Survey of Northern Blacks. New York. Seminar Press.

Davis, James A.

1971 Elementary Survey Analysis. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall

DeFleur, Melvin L. and Chang-Soo Cho

1957 "Assimilation of Japanese-Born Women in an American City." Social Problems 4 (3) (January):244-257.

Dohrenwend, Burce P. and Robert J. Smith

1962 "Toward a Theory of Acculturation." Southwestern Journal of Anthropology 18 (Spring):30-39.

Dreger, Ralph Mason

1973 "Intellectual Functioning." Pp. 185-229 in K.S. Miller and R.M. Dreger (eds.). Comparative Studies of Blacks and Whites in the United States. New York: Seminar Press.

Edwards, Allen L.

1957 Techniques of Attitude Scale Construction. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts.

Gordon, Milton

1964 Assimilation in American Life. New York: Oxford University Press.

Grebler, Leo, Joan W. Moore and Ralph C. Guzman

1970 The Mexican American People: The Nations Second Largest Minority. New York: Free Press-MacMillan.

Horinouchi, Isao

1967 "Educational Values and Preadaptation in the Acculturation of the Japanese American." Sacramento Anthropological Society, Paper 7 (Fall):i-60.

Kitano, H.H.

1969 Japanese Americans: The Evolution of a Subculture. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall.

Knudsen, D.D., H. Pope and D.P. Irish.

1967 "Response differences to questions on sexual standards: An interview-questionnaire comparison." Public Opinion Quarterly, 31:290-297.

L'Abate, Luciano, Yvonne Oslin, and Vernon W. Stone

1973 "Educational Achievement." Pp. 325-354 in K.S. Miller and R.M. Dreger (eds.). Comparative Studies of Blacks and Whites in the United States. New York: Seminar Press.

Levine, Gene N. and Edna M. Bonacich

1970 "Nonindividual Units in the Analysis of Surveys: The Case of the Japanese American Research Project." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Pacific Chapter of the American Association for Public Opinion Research, San Diego, California, January 31, 1970.

Levine, Gene N., Darrel Montero, and Robert Rhodes

1975 The Japanese American Community: Persistence and Transformation Over Three Generations. (Book length manuscript). Japanese American Research Project, University of California, Los Angeles.

Masuda, Minoru, Gary H. Matsumoto, and Gerald M. Meredith

1970 "Ethnic Identity in Three Generations of Japanese Americans." Journal of Social Psychology 81 (2nd Half) (August):199-207.

McGinnis, R.

1953 "Scaling interview data." American Sociological Review, 18:514-521.

Menzel, Herbert

1953 "A New Coefficient for Scalogram Analysis." Public Opinion Quarterly 17 (Summer):268-280.

Merton, Robert K.

1941 "Intermarriage and Social Structure: Fact and Theory." Psychiatry 4 (August):361-374.

Miyamoto, S. Frank

1939 "Social Solidarity Among the Japanese in Seattle." University of Washington Publications in the Social Sciences 11 (2) (December):57-130.

Montero, Darrel

1972 "The Mail Questionnaire and the Research Interview: A Social Desirability Study." (Unpublished manuscript.) Japanese American Research Project, University of California, Los Angeles.

Park, Robert

1950 Race and Culture. New York: Free Press.

Petersen, William

1971 Japanese Americans: Oppression and Success. New York: Random House.

Pettigrew, T.F.

1964 A Profile of the Negro American. Princeton: Van Nostrand.

Roy, Prodipto

1962 "The Measurement of Assimilation: The Spokane Indians." American Journal of Sociology 67 (March):541-551.

Schmid, Calvin F. and Charles E. Nobbe

1965 "Socioeconomic differentials among nonwhite races." American Sociological Review 30 (December):909-922.

Schwartz, A.J.

1970 "Traditional Values and Contemporary Achievement of Japanese-American Pupils." Los Angeles: Center for the Study of Evaluation, University of California.

1971 "The Culturally Advantaged: A Study of Japanese American Pupils." Sociology and Social Research 55 (3) (April):341-353.

Taft, Ronald

1957 "A Psychological Model for the Study of Social Assimilation." Human Relations 10:141-156.

Tinker, John N.

1972 "Intermarriage and Ethnic Boundaries: The Japanese-American Case," paper presented at the annual meetings of the Pacific Sociological Association, Portland, Oregon, April.

U.S. Bureau of the Census

1963a Nonwhite Population by Race. Final Report PC (2)-1C. Washington: United States Government Printing Office.

1963b Detailed Characteristics. United States Summary. Final Report PC (1)-1D. Washington: United States Government Printing Office.

1973a Characteristics of the Population. United States Summary. v.1., pt. 1, sec. 2. Washington: United States Government Printing Office.

1973b Subject Report: American Indians. PC (2)-1F. Washington: United States Government Printing Office.

1973c Subject Report: Negro Population. PC (2)-1B. Washington: United States Government Printing Office.

1973d Subject Report: Japanese, Chinese and Filipinos in the United States. PC (2)-1G. Washington: United States Government Printing Office.

Uyeki, Eugene S.

1960 "Correlates of Ethnic Identification." American Journal of Sociology 65 (5) (March): 468-474.